

475.27  
8  
A G. 292

# LETTER

Written to a Friend in *WILTS*,

Upon occasion of a late Ridiculous

## PAMPHLET.

Wherein was inserted a pretended

PROPHECIE

OF

*THOMAS BECKET'S, &c.*

ANTONIN.

Ἀλαζῆνι μὴ μὲν τὰ θεοῦ τοῖς ἰσχυ-  
αίσις συμβαίνει.

LONDON, Printed by R. D.

Anno Dom. 1666.

LETTER

27-1-18-19-20-21-22-23-24-25-26-27-28-29-30-31-32-33-34-35-36-37-38-39-40-41-42-43-44-45-46-47-48-49-50-51-52-53-54-55-56-57-58-59-60-61-62-63-64-65-66-67-68-69-70-71-72-73-74-75-76-77-78-79-80-81-82-83-84-85-86-87-88-89-90-91-92-93-94-95-96-97-98-99-100-101-102-103-104-105-106-107-108-109-110-111-112-113-114-115-116-117-118-119-120-121-122-123-124-125-126-127-128-129-130-131-132-133-134-135-136-137-138-139-140-141-142-143-144-145-146-147-148-149-150-151-152-153-154-155-156-157-158-159-160-161-162-163-164-165-166-167-168-169-170-171-172-173-174-175-176-177-178-179-180-181-182-183-184-185-186-187-188-189-190-191-192-193-194-195-196-197-198-199-200-201-202-203-204-205-206-207-208-209-210-211-212-213-214-215-216-217-218-219-220-221-222-223-224-225-226-227-228-229-230-231-232-233-234-235-236-237-238-239-240-241-242-243-244-245-246-247-248-249-250-251-252-253-254-255-256-257-258-259-260-261-262-263-264-265-266-267-268-269-270-271-272-273-274-275-276-277-278-279-280-281-282-283-284-285-286-287-288-289-290-291-292-293-294-295-296-297-298-299-300-301-302-303-304-305-306-307-308-309-310-311-312-313-314-315-316-317-318-319-320-321-322-323-324-325-326-327-328-329-330-331-332-333-334-335-336-337-338-339-340-341-342-343-344-345-346-347-348-349-350-351-352-353-354-355-356-357-358-359-360-361-362-363-364-365-366-367-368-369-370-371-372-373-374-375-376-377-378-379-380-381-382-383-384-385-386-387-388-389-390-391-392-393-394-395-396-397-398-399-400-401-402-403-404-405-406-407-408-409-410-411-412-413-414-415-416-417-418-419-420-421-422-423-424-425-426-427-428-429-430-431-432-433-434-435-436-437-438-439-440-441-442-443-444-445-446-447-448-449-450-451-452-453-454-455-456-457-458-459-460-461-462-463-464-465-466-467-468-469-470-471-472-473-474-475-476-477-478-479-480-481-482-483-484-485-486-487-488-489-490-491-492-493-494-495-496-497-498-499-500-501-502-503-504-505-506-507-508-509-510-511-512-513-514-515-516-517-518-519-520-521-522-523-524-525-526-527-528-529-530-531-532-533-534-535-536-537-538-539-540-541-542-543-544-545-546-547-548-549-550-551-552-553-554-555-556-557-558-559-560-561-562-563-564-565-566-567-568-569-570-571-572-573-574-575-576-577-578-579-580-581-582-583-584-585-586-587-588-589-590-591-592-593-594-595-596-597-598-599-600-601-602-603-604-605-606-607-608-609-610-611-612-613-614-615-616-617-618-619-620-621-622-623-624-625-626-627-628-629-630-631-632-633-634-635-636-637-638-639-640-641-642-643-644-645-646-647-648-649-650-651-652-653-654-655-656-657-658-659-660-661-662-663-664-665-666-667-668-669-670-671-672-673-674-675-676-677-678-679-680-681-682-683-684-685-686-687-688-689-690-691-692-693-694-695-696-697-698-699-700-701-702-703-704-705-706-707-708-709-710-711-712-713-714-715-716-717-718-719-720-721-722-723-724-725-726-727-728-729-730-731-732-733-734-735-736-737-738-739-740-741-742-743-744-745-746-747-748-749-750-751-752-753-754-755-756-757-758-759-760-761-762-763-764-765-766-767-768-769-770-771-772-773-774-775-776-777-778-779-780-781-782-783-784-785-786-787-788-789-790-791-792-793-794-795-796-797-798-799-800-801-802-803-804-805-806-807-808-809-810-811-812-813-814-815-816-817-818-819-820-821-822-823-824-825-826-827-828-829-830-831-832-833-834-835-836-837-838-839-840-841-842-843-844-845-846-847-848-849-850-851-852-853-854-855-856-857-858-859-860-861-862-863-864-865-866-867-868-869-870-871-872-873-874-875-876-877-878-879-880-881-882-883-884-885-886-887-888-889-890-891-892-893-894-895-896-897-898-899-900-901-902-903-904-905-906-907-908-909-910-911-912-913-914-915-916-917-918-919-920-921-922-923-924-925-926-927-928-929-930-931-932-933-934-935-936-937-938-939-940-941-942-943-944-945-946-947-948-949-950-951-952-953-954-955-956-957-958-959-960-961-962-963-964-965-966-967-968-969-970-971-972-973-974-975-976-977-978-979-980-981-982-983-984-985-986-987-988-989-990-991-992-993-994-995-996-997-998-999-1000-1001-1002-1003-1004-1005-1006-1007-1008-1009-1010-1011-1012-1013-1014-1015-1016-1017-1018-1019-1020-1021-1022-1023-1024-1025-1026-1027-1028-1029-1030-1031-1032-1033-1034-1035-1036-1037-1038-1039-1040-1041-1042-1043-1044-1045-1046-1047-104

...to the ...

1931-1932

habituado a beber por si só.

110417015

2077583-2XJCH

1897

1000 2240 1000 2240

1944

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

2327-71-8

To

My Worthily Honoured Friend

T. G. of A. Esquire.

Dear Sir,

THE Stoicks have rank'd all the concerns of man under these two heads, *ut ipse dicitur* and *ut ipse non dicitur*, such things as are under the jurisdiction and command of his Will, and such as are not. In the former every Virtuoso of the Sect fancied himself in the Poets Ironie to be *uno minor Jove*, an Imperial Monarch, and his Throne but one step below *Jupiters*, his Will his Scepter, and his Passions his Empire. And whoever had not advanc'd unto this Sovereignty within himself, was to be no Saint in their Calendar, no King in their Chronicle. For the latter (I mean the various rencontres and occurrents of life, which they never challeng'd for any Subjects of their Kingdome, but honestly resigned them

W

A 2

to

to their respective Lords and Masters, especially to the Lord Paramount of all) they seem'd to have verie little or no concern, en-joyning their Disciples to lye with as much ease and satisfaction in *Phalaris's* Bull, as on a Bed of Down. Now, Sir, though I look upon these Stoicks as meer Hectors in Practical Philosophie, yet so far we agree, that men ought to be severe and curious in the manage of what is any way in their Power, to provide *honest things in the sight of God and Man*. But as for such events as no Wisdom or Virtue of theirs can hinder, *εἰς αὐτὴν οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδὲν*, to be content with what comes next, and in all to act and suffer *κατὰ λόγον*, as becomes men of Reason and Magnanimitie, or rather as becomes the spirit of a Christian.

Sir, the Solemnitie of this Preface may possibly invite you to some higher expectations then I have design'd it for. The truth is, I should be heartily asham'd to give you the trouble that follows, but for some more urgent (reasons I cannot call them, but) occasions then I could at first Imagine, and which I shall freely deposite in your bosome at our next meeting.

We



We live, *Sir*, in a world that lies in folly and wickedness, and though the Grace of God (without which we are nothing) may secure us from scandal, or any deserved blame from man, yet it does not exempt us from malice, or mistakes in others, nor from the stroke of a foolish or reproachful Tongue. The last time I had the contentment to see you, you were pleased to mention a late *sensless and ridiculous Pamphlet*, wherein the most accomplished Publisher ('tis a pity he conceal'd his Name, otherwise 'tis like enough, it might have made *noise* sufficient:) He, I say, has lately Printed a certain Prophecy pretended to be *Thomas Becket's*, where after some very irreverent and rudely simple Reflections upon divers Eminent and Worthy Persons (that could no way become *his quill* to mention) He quotes a Letter of mine written to a private Friend (Mr. T.) a grave Divine in the Country, and a constant honest Member of the Church of *England*: where also to the high uncivility of naming Me upon that occasion, he thought fit to super-add this either hasty or impudent untruth, that I (amongst so many of *worthier names*) delivered

as

as my own judgment what he has plac'd in the Margin of that Prophecy. I may possibly know the first Letter of the Publishers Name (with its *alias*, if it have one) but out of my respect to his suppos'd Profession, I think not fit to mention my conjectures of it in this paper. Onely Sir, I have received such a Character of him I take to be the man, from some of unquestionable credit, that know him very well, as renders him very capable of doing such or far nobler exploits, whereof he may in due time give some account to his Superiors.

But Sir, to present you with a true and plain account of the whole matter on my part, thus it was. A little after Christmas (as I remember) that pretended Prophecie was brought from *Abingdon* to this Town, and sounding in the general such a Harmony to the genius of the Time, it presently became both the Musick and discourse of all, not as the Publishers Ingenuity has phrased it, *the unanimous resolve of all* --- as if forsooth a Convocation had been call'd about it: This pretended Prophecy was, I confess, sent by me inclosed in a Letter as the Newes of the Town to Mr. Teates, together with a small key  
to

to the Text in the Margin, which I borrowed for that occasion of the common Discourse; and indeed, excepting but one clause (for the barbarous Latine in another, is not considerable) I see nothing in the Prophecy of so much depth, as to need a Delian Diver (of which sort I am far from being one myself) to fetch it up. The Comment Sir was none of mine more then the bare Transcribing; and this is all I am responsible for: the Ingenious Publisher must answer for the rest. So that if you will have the state of the case laid in short before you, you know well enough it will amount to this conclusion; I wrote a Letter to a Friend, wherein I inclos'd a piece of innocent Newes, generally discoursed off, and receiv'd with much seeming contentment by all, and the Publisher thought fit, in the depth of his wisdom, to give it Press-mony, that so it might march along with him in his hungry (if not worse) design, *for the comfort and satisfaction of all his Majesties loving Subjects.* Now Sir, to this day, I am so dull of apprehension, as (after all my pains and curiosity of research) not to understand where lies my fault. For as

His own  
words.

to the *vis'it' ipse*, I grant it was in my power to write, or not, to send harmless ( nay generally applauded ) News, or not; and so it is, and has been in the power of worthier men then my self, who yet have not been afraid to use their liberty for fear of a small *free-boter* in the way, that might possibly make prize of the fruit. As for the taking and exposing of it to open Port-sale, with a flourish of foolery and nonsense into the bargain, I take my self to be no way concern'd in that, *ipse viderit*.

Sir, I must again profess to you my shame, that I should *causam dicere* in such a very trifle, in which I have no ground of doubt, but that besides your self, I have many worthy and readie compurgators, whose quality, judgement, and honesty, are my sufficient protection against such a *nothing* as this. Neither is it that I fancy my name (which yet should be valuable to my self) of any such consideration, as that you, or any *other* of my worthy Frinds should be much concern'd in its defence. But seeing so many other both greater & better *names* embarqu'd in the same passive contumely, I hope I may have leave to use this Letter of Reprisal; and so enough (if not too much) of that.

As

As for my own Judgment of that, or any other Prophecies of the like nature, I shall briefly and freely impart it to you thus; I deny not

1. But that persons of little or no acquaintance with the Spirit of Truth and Holiness may yet be endued with a Spirit of Propheſie. Thus was *Balaam* who loved the wages of iniquitie, a man whose eyes were open (as he ſpeakes of himſelf) enabled (amongſt other leſſe concerns) to point unto the Star of *Jacob*, to Chriſt himſelf. And I have no cauſe to doubt of the ſame *influxus Propheticus* (or Prophetical Spirit) in the old Heathen Sybils, ſome of which you know are quoted by *Virgil*, and their fam'd *Acroſticks* mention'd in the general by *Cicero* in his Books of Divination, and particularly ſet down by *Eusebius*, nay their Authority urged *ad Homines* againſt the Infidel Heathens by ſeveral of the Primitive (eſpecially of the Greek) Fathers. You have their Poems and Propheſies compil'd in this laſt Age into one Volume by *Opſopæus*, though (as he complains himſelf) with ſeveral juſtly ſuſpected Interpolations and Corruptions, which may paſſe either

De Vita  
Conſt.

B

amongſt



amongst the *pia fraudes*, or strong Credulities, or some other ordinary misfortunes of times and persons, from which no age, and perhaps but few of the more eminent elder Writings of Religion have been free. But that such Prophecies <sup>there</sup> were, and that they deliver'd high <sup>things</sup> ~~ones~~ of Christ himself, I see no cause to question, with the good leave of an Excellent and Learned Person, who has argued the contrarie, but upon such grounds as I am confident his great Abilities had not exactly weigh'd, and which are sufficiently refuted by our Learned *Montague* in his *Apparatus*. And the reason is plainly and briefly this, because the Spirit of Prophecie is not *gratia gratum faciens*, but *gratis data* (as the Schools have phras'd it,) conferr'd sometimes upon such as neither well understand, nor be any way suitably affected with their own prædictions: and it is I must confess questionable to me, whether such Revelations of *the way, the truth, and the life*, though somewhat dark and enigmatical to the Gentile World of old, and those advantages which are (though more remotely) in the power of the *Heathen world* to make use of

now

now by their actual, or *possible* commerce with Christendome, will totally acquit them in the Day of Judgement from a *positive Infidelity*, such at least *indirectly* and by just *interpretation*: seeing it is not ignorance which excuses, but that which is absolutely invincible, nor is it a sufficient discharge to any man from his dutie that he had not the promulgation of the Law, unless upon the use of all the means that were morally possible he yet remains in ignorance that such a Law there is. But I find my self on a sudden (when I thought I had been coasting along the shore) in a wide working Sea, 'tis time for me to make to Land again: for though it were no impossibilitie to enlarge into a Volume upon this Theme, and that which occasion'd it, yet I must remember I am writing a Letter, and that we may farther discourse it, when you please and God shall permit.

Nor 2. do I question but even since the great infusion of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostolique times, men eminent for Sanctity and Holiness of Life, may be inspir'd with power to foretel some things to come. For what wonder if they who converse so much

with Heaven, and lean as it were with Saint *John* in the Bosome of Christ, be sometimes admitted to his open Brest? The examples I confess in no Age after that of the Apostles are numerous, nor is there any such visible necessity of Prophetical spirits since, as then, and in the general (and almost continued) great Apostacies under the Law. Besides the gifts of the spirit are his own, and he dispenses them as he pleases. However I could furnish you (though I believe your own indefatigable reading may save me the labour) with several instances in some few later Centuries of unquestionable reputation. But as for other vagrant Prædictions which flye about among the Vulgar, I look upon the most as poor easie cheats and meer designs, (though of several complexions) and I think it were no difficult matter for a man of ordinarie parts to make twenty such in a day: for either (pardon the solocisme) they are made *post factum*, and so are not Prædictions, but Histories, (of which sort no doubt the world is full) or they are *sagittæ volantes in tenebris*, arrows shot at futuritie upon adventure, which flying in the dark may be thought to fall whither they

they were never directed, unless out of a deceitful Bow.

Barclay (as I remember) in his *Icon Animorum*, is very peremptory in his Character of the English Genius, *Gens Anglorum semper dedita Prophetiis*, that we are great admirers of Prophecies, he means it I suppose of the common sort. Perhaps he had seen or heard of an Act of Parliament in *Edw.* the Sixth's time, which looks severely upon that piece of curiosity, and thence possibly took the measures of his conjecture, and for my part, I intend no petition for the Abrogation of that Law. *Baronius ad ann. 178.* tells us of *Marcus Aurelius* the Emperour, that he banished (*relegavit in Insulam*) one that had foretold the Tyranny of the Rebel *Cassius*, and withall made a Law (as he quotes it out of *Modestinus*) that all such Prophets should expect the same punishment, *Qui aliquid facerent quo leves hominum animi superstitione numinis terrerentur*, designing (as he thinks) especially the Christians: which if it were so, the chief ground of his mistake, was no doubt his misery; but, setting that aside, the Law might be rational. For experience sufficiently informs.

forms us how the doting humour that raigns among the vulgar upon these humane (and commonly design'd) predictions, takes them off from the nobler and more Christian Contemplations of their Duty both to God and man. I have often wonder'd to observe men that my Charity bids me hope are Pious, and that are otherwise learned and sober, so sick of this disease.

For the Scriptural Prophecies, which are either known or handsomely suppos'd to have had their accomplishment already, we have more cause to applaud, then condemn their Industry, who have rationally attempted to give them more light to the world; 'tis a pity if the clouds and mists which vaile the face of humane Story and Chronology, have in any circumstance injur'd the success, and set learned Brethren as well by the ears, as the tongues, together in the dark. But as for the rest, that are yet but in the womb of History, (or Providence if you please) the time of their Birth being so very uncertain; if men will needs be Godfathers, me thinks they might have patience till the Child be born, and not by their hasty confidence force it out into the world



world before its time. I am not censuring the modest or ingenuous conjectures of men in these cases, but in our converse with the Bible, I wish the humour were not so common of beginning at the wrong end, and so conning the *Revelation* before *Genesis*, rolling the Prophetical Scriptures with delight under our tongues, but either spitting out, or hastily swallowing unchew'd the plain and practical dictates of the Holy Ghost. Nor is our modesty here a slur upon the darker Oracles of God, as if they were delivered in vain. *He hath shewed thee, O man,* says the Prophet, *what is good*; he has writ thy duty with a Sun-beam, and if in some more speculative concerns the cloud dwells upon the Sacred Tabernacle, yet even there also, *the glory of the Lord* appears. I bless God for Saint *Johns* *Apocalypse*, as well as for the more lightsome Scriptures, and I hope receive benefit by its darkest pieces, though I cannot apprehend with one of our Country-men, that in this, or the other passage, such or such an *English* great Lord (by Name) is design'd. The number 666, which of late has made so much noise in the world, and is by many lookt upon as  
fatal

fatal to this present year, I meet with in that Sacred Book, but whether it must needs be applied to the course of time, & if so, whether to our computation of the year, I have neither the skill nor confidence to assert. However, I cannot but applaud the very ingenious Labours of sundry late Writers upon that Prophetical number, especially those of Mr. *Potter*, and of a nameless Author in a small Book of his Printed *ann. 662*. Intituled, *Christ and Antichrist, or 666 multiplied by 2*, who has trod a different path from all others I know off in his new *Algebra of two years, and*, in both which, (though I dare not say there is demonstration enough in either to satisfy the judgment, yet) certainly there is curiosity enough to entertain a Learned Fancy with delight.

But Sir, neither the Prophecie which gave occasion to this Letter (nor any of the like nature) must think to come in competition with those that own no other but the *Father of Lights* for theirs.

For the pretended Author of the former, or any Prophecie of his, I have but little to say. Our Chronicle has given us such an account of him, as that (excepting his zeal for  
his

his Holiness) I can find no <sup>such</sup> traces of extraordinary Sanctitie, as might entitle him to the gift of Prophecie, and upon what other account he should be capacitated for it, I know not.

But, Sir, we have a more sure Word of Prophecie, unto which we shall do well if we take heed, without regard to idle Dreams, or studied Delusions, or humane pretended Revelations whatsoever. This every where acquaints us that if we Repent, iniquitie shall not be our ruine, but if we shall still do wickedly, the just God can Plague us yet seven times more for our Abominations, 'til we know that the Most High Ruleth in the Kingdomes of Men, and that he will not be mocked or brav'd by Worms of the Earth. And had we store of such examples as Your Self, Sir, who think it no solecism to be Great and Good, then why might not Davids Motto be Englands too, *Quem Timebo?* Of whom shall I be afraid? But as Plinie minds me, *Et hoc amantis est parce laudare*: I shall release your modestie, and discharge your trouble from this Paper with one word, which I dare say you will own for the Child

not of my Tongue, but of my Heart, namely,  
that I am by a Thousand Obligations, but by  
none more then those of your Exemplarie  
Worth and Virtue,

*Dear and Worlby Sir,*

*Your ever most Affectionate*

*Servant,*

**T. T.**

---

